GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:51
ANSWERED ON:24.11.2006
DEVELOPMENT OF WASTELAND
Agarwal Shri Dhirendra;Chavda Shri Harisinh Pratapsinh

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the area of wasteland, barren land, degraded land and surplus land in the country at present separately and the area of each such type of land utilised and brought under cultivation since inception of Integrated Wasteland Development Project (IWDP), State-wise;

(b) the suggestions received, if any, from various agencies for utilisation of such lands during the last three years and current year alongwith the action taken/to be taken by the Government thereon;

(c) the details of the projects received and approved by the Government in this regard during the said period indicating the present status of each of them, State-wise;

(d) the basic objective and funding pattern of IWDP;

(e) the amount provided and utilised under IWDP during the said period, year-wise and State-wise; and

(f) the future strategy of the Government for utilisation of the said lands as well as the fundings received from the private sector in this regard, if any?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN TYE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH)

(a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (f) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.51 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 24.11.2006

(a) As per `Wastelands Atlas of India-2005` prepared by NRSA, Hyderabad, the total waste lands in the country are estimated at 55.27 million hectare (ha). This includes 12.117 million hectare of unculturable barren/rocky/steep slopes/snow covered areas and 12.655 million ha. of degraded forests. The remaining 30.498 million ha. of wasteland is available for treatment under IWDP. The total area treated under IWDP since inception is 1.247 million ha. The State- wise details are at Annexure `A`. Besides, 5.942 million ha. waste land has been distributed by State Governments.

(b) The National Commission on Farmers have recommended use of waste lands for raising plantations for bio-diesel production. The Planning Commission had set up a committee on development of bio-fuel (2003), which recommended for launching of a National Mission on Bio-diesel with special focus on plantation of Jatropha curcas in forest and non- forest areas, especially in waste lands. Accordingly, this Ministry has taken steps to launch the Bio-diesel Mission. The Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) at its meeting held on 9th October 2006 recommended the proposal for establishment of National Bio-diesel Mission and launching of the demonstration phase of the bio-diesel programme for obtaining Cabinet approval.

(c) Under the Hariyali Guidelines, prioritized lists of blocks/districts for sanctioning IWDP projects are invited each year from the States. New IWDP projects are sanctioned from these prioritized lists by a Project Sanctioning Committee, which includes a representative of each of the State Governments. The projects are approved depending upon the extent of waste lands, capacity to implement waste land projects, performance of the States in implementation of IWDP projects and availability of budget after meeting the committed liabilities of ongoing projects. The details of State wise and year wise projects approved by the Government during last three years and current year is at Annexure `B`.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (f) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No.51 due for answer on 24.11.2006

(d)&(e) The basic objective of the Integrated Wasteland Development Programme is to check land degradation by treatment of non-forest wastelands on watershed basis and to strengthen the natural resources through community participation and empowerment. The projects under IWDP are sanctioned at a cost norm of Rs. 6,000 per ha. in which the central share is Rs. 5500 and the state share is Rs. 500. The funds under Hariyali Guidelines are released for each project in five instalments of 15%, 30%, 30%, 15% and 10%. The IWDP projects are demand driven and a subsequent installment is released when more than 50% of the funds released under the previous installment have been utilized. The funds do not lapse at the end of the financial year. The amount provided under IWDP year wise and state wise is given at Annexure `C`.

(f) The Ministry propose to launch National Mission on Bio-diesel in two phases i.e. phase-I as demonstration project over a period of 5 years followed by phase-II, a self-sustaining expansion of bio-diesel programme. There is no proposal of funding from the private sector for establishing the Mission. `Distribution of waste land to the landless` has been included in the restructured Twenty Point Programme (TPP)-2006 of the government.